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3.5(c) **ARGENTINA:** Military leaders opposed to Colonel Damasco's role as interior minister are said to have demanded a solution by today.

Argentine Military Continuing Pressure on Officer in Cabinet

Argentine military leaders opposed to army Colonel Damasco's role as interior minister have reportedly demanded a solution to the problem by today. They prefer that he leave the cabinet, but may be satisfied if he gives up his active military status.

Several regional army corps commanders as well as the commanders in chief of the navy and air force are flatly opposed to Damasco's remaining in the government while on active military duty. They believe he is diminishing the prestige of the armed services by linking them to a hopelessly inept government.

Some of Damasco's opponents have apparently been floating coup rumors designed to increase the pressure for his removal. The press has reported that Foreign Minister Robledo, well regarded by the military, has asked army commander in chief General Numa Laplane, who has backed Damasco, to consider offering his own resignation as well.

The departure of Numa Laplane could open the way for a more conservative army chief, possibly General Videla, who heads the joint general staff. Videla is reportedly among those who have considered a military take-over.

The administration's failure to offer a compromise—such as taking away Damasco's military status—has served to increase the discontent of his opponents and suggests to them the government is incapable of acting. The controversy also is increasingly focusing the military's attention on the larger issue of whether to allow President Peron's government to remain in office.

The administration is under fire from all sides. During a weekend marked by continuing leftist violence, the Peronist party, of which the President is titular head, held a convention at which many delegates angrily opposed her choice for the party's number two position. Opposition congressmen meanwhile are calling for a full-scale investigation of charges that the President recently attempted to transfer funds from a charitable organization to the estate of her late husband.

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